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WEEKEND

NEW YORK

December 23-25, 2011

NYC's #1 FREE DAILY

Making her MARK

► 'The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo' star Rooney Mara has already made an indelible impression on Hollywood, earning a Golden Globe nod ► How she got into the skin of Lisbeth Salander {page 10}



IT'S A 'ZOO'
OUT THERE FOR
MATT DAMON
FILMS {page 12}



GIANTS VS. JETS
LOSER LIKELY
OUT OF PLAYOFFS
SPORTS {page 20}

ADAM LAMBERT
GETS PUNCHY,
LITERALLY
THE WORD {page 15}



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In the news

Alec out as mayor

Alec Baldwin ruled out a possible 2013 New York City mayoral run Wednesday when he said he "lost my appetite" for politics, during his weekly WNYC podcast. Baldwin said it was the ambition of the other mayoral candidates that turned him off.

METRO/CR

In the news



Wrong side of the tracks?

Don't think those train tracks will keep you safe. Police are looking for the man above, who they say climbed across the tracks at the 77th Street and Lexington Avenue station on Dec. 11 to punch another man in the face on the other platform. METRO/EAE

Weiner's son born

NEW YORK. The Weiner family is in the news again. Former Congressman Anthony Weiner, who resigned from office after a sexting scandal in June, has a new baby boy. Weiner and his wife, Huma, welcomed Jordan Zane Weiner on Wednesday, 10 days before his Dec. 31 due date, according to the New York Post. The former politician reportedly e-mailed friends about their "sparkling wonder," adding, "Did I mention his mom is amazing?" Weiner and his wife live in Greenwich Village. METRO/AB



New ads target 'light smokers'

NEW YORK. Look for these new anti-smoking ads from the city Health Department. The city launched their "One Cigarette is One Too Many" campaign Thursday emphasizing the harm of "light" smoking — even just one cigarette a day. The ads will be on TV through Jan. 15. The Health Department is also offering free nicotine gum to people who smoke fewer than 10 cigarettes each day. METRO/AB

Free Wi-Fi at NYC airports

NEW YORK. Skype is giving New Yorkers a holiday present they're sure to appreciate — free Wi-Fi at the airport. Travelers will be able to get online on Skype's dime at LaGuardia, JFK and Newark airports from now until Dec. 27. Web addicts just need to sign in to Skype to claim their one hour of free Internet service. METRO/EAE

Toy soldiers. Real heroes



Sgt. M.L. Roman and Cpl. A.G. Hamilton picked up the toys from Metro's office on Thursday morning.

EMILY ARNE UPSTAIR/METRO

US Marines pick up toys

And they're gone! Hundreds of toys are headed to New York City children for the holidays thanks to the generosity of Metro's readers. U.S. Marines picked up the toys Thursday as part of Toys for Tots, a program that donates toys to various charities across the city. METRO/EAE

Mystery after B'klyn man found burned

► Ditmas Park cafe owner disappeared Oct. 31 ► Family frantically searched for him ► Identified after a shot, badly burned body found in Pa.

Family and friends of a Brooklyn man who vanished in October are left wondering how he ended up as a charred corpse on an isolated road in rural Pennsylvania.

The Lehigh County district attorney's office told Metro that they were able to identify the body found in South Whitehall Township, Pa., on Nov. 1 as Joshua James Rubin. Rubin was killed by a single gunshot wound and then, mysteriously, his body was set on fire.

Rubin, 30, a Kensington resident, disappeared Oct.



31. Friends and family were concerned because he was diabetic, and also was reportedly diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

Quoted

"Identification was made more difficult by the fact that the body had been set on fire." GARLICKI

Rubin owned Whisk Bakery Cafe in Ditmas Park, where the community papered lampposts with signs to find him and also launched a "Find Josh Rubin" Facebook group.

Public employees working in Pennsylvania found the body on Nov. 1, accord-

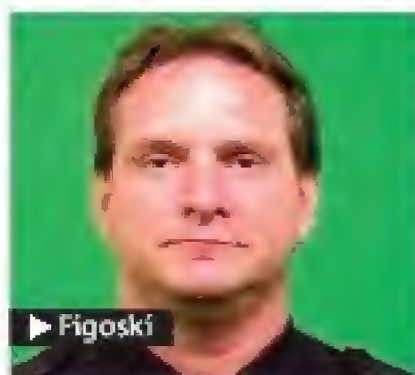
ing to Debbie Garlicki, a spokeswoman for the Lehigh County district attorney. The corpse was so badly charred it wasn't until this week that Rubin was identified through DNA, Garlicki said.

The Lehigh County coroner ruled the death a homicide by gunshot wound Nov. 2, Garlicki said.

Rubin's brother Jonathan told the Ditmas Park Blog yesterday that the funeral would be in his native Rhode Island Tuesday.



ALISON BOWEN
alison.bowen@metro.us



► Figoski

Fund for cop's kin

New Yorkers have raised more than \$1 million for the four daughters of Peter Figoski, the veteran NYPD officer who was killed Dec. 12. Figoski had decided not to retire in order to

save money for his daughters' education, and the New York Post opened a fund so New Yorkers could help. Donation information is available at nycpolicefoundation.org.

\$1M+

By Thursday afternoon, the total for slain officer Peter Figoski's four daughters was \$1,209,776 and growing.

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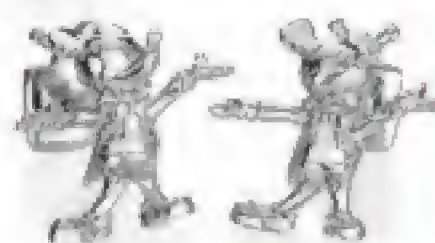
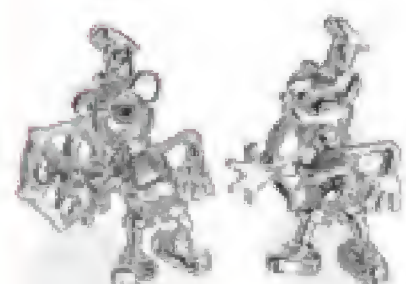
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04

NYC's #1 FREE DAILY
WEEKEND, DECEMBER 23-25, 2011

Long wait for 9/11 money

- ▶ One-year anniversary of Zadroga
- ▶ Yet many responders still waiting on the Victim Compensation Fund

TOM WILLIAMS/REUTERS/CORBIS OUTLINE



▶ First responders are still waiting on cash from the Zadroga Act.

Anthony Flammia estimates he is losing \$50,000 a year after 9/11 health issues forced him out of the job he loved.

When he was an NYPD officer, Flammia helped evacuate the falling towers on Sept. 11, 2001. But he had to retire owing to post-

traumatic stress disorder, reactive airway disease and asthma — which doctors say he contracted after breathing in contaminated air at the site.

He is applying to the federal Victim Compensation Fund for money to make up for his missing wages. The fund was created when the Zadroga Act became law last December.

However, one year later, responders like Flammia are still waiting to receive money and muddling through paperwork.

"The process is a little slow," he told Metro. "I'm hearing a lot of frustration."

A Department of Justice spokeswoman said 1,500 people have registered online, starting the claims process.

Many need the money even more than he does, said Flammia. "There are people out there that have cancers, that are on oxygen," he said. "Those guys are living day by day."

How long will it take?

NEW YORK. The Department of Justice does not yet have an estimate of when the funds will be funneled to responders.

Because the paperwork is lengthy, it takes months to apply, said attorney Daniel Hansen, who represents hundreds of responders.

Flammia said he and hundreds of other 9/11 heroes are relying on credit cards and are tapping into their retirement funds.

● METRO/AB



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Tell MSG...Get Real and Do the Deal.

Drop in jobless claims signals economic hope

The number of Americans filing new claims for jobless benefits hit a 3-1/2 year low last week, bolstering views the economy was gaining momentum, even though third-quarter growth was revised down.

Other data on Thursday underscored the firming tone in the economy, with consumer sentiment scaling a six-month high in December and a barometer of future activity rising for a seventh straight month in November.

While the economy is wrapping up 2011 with a spring in its step, bickering over budget policy in

Health care

Growth, which had previously been reported to have expanded at a 2 percent pace, was held back by a sharp drop in health care spending. A month ago, health care spending had risen.

Washington and the debt crisis in Europe have cast a cloud over its prospects next year.

A payroll tax cut and benefits for the long-term unemployed, both of which are due to expire at

year end, have become tangled in partisan politics and it is unclear whether they will be renewed.

"The economy is carrying some clear momentum into 2012," said Joel Naroff, chief economist at Naroff Economic Advisors in Holland, Pennsylvania. "If Congress doesn't kill that by failing to extend the tax breaks, we can look forward to a better year ahead."

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits dropped 4,000 to 364,000, the lowest level since April 2008, the Labor Department said. **REUTERS**

Autos. Toyota



► Toyota announced it would aim to boost global sales in 2012, seeking growth in emerging markets to counter sluggish demand in the crisis-hit developed world.

Record sales to follow bad year?

Toyota Motor Corp forecast a 20 percent jump in global sales to a record 8.48 million vehicles next year as it claws back from this year's output losses caused by natural disasters in Japan and Thailand. Toyota overtook General Motors as the world's top-selling automaker in 2008 but is set to lose that crown this year as supply-chain disruptions from the March earthquake and tsunami in Japan and flooding in Thailand cut production around the world. **REUTERS**

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Opinion

TOM FOREMAN

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT
FOR CNN



THE TALE OF SANTA MAYBE

When I was little, Santa came through for me many times with desperately desired prizes: Hot Wheels cars, a snare drum and even a ventriloquist dummy. (I was a lonely child.)

Mindful of that and thinking of all the late-year turmoil here in D.C., I noticed a sign saying Santa was visiting Capitol Hill, so I went to check it out. When what to my wondering eyes should appear, but three Santas all in a row! What luck!

CNN=POLITICS

Quoted

"Trust me, if this keeps up, we'll have a whole new bunch of Santas by next year."

The next Santa smiled and beckoned. "Season's greetings, big fella! I'm Democrat Santa. What do you want this year?"

"Uh, as I was just telling Republican Santa, I'd like some sort of agreement on this payroll tax dispute and —"

"Fine. Fine. You've come to the right person, and this is the season of giving. Only I have to ask you to first fill out this financial disclosure form. It's standard procedure. Just let me know if you have a job, any savings, your own house — that sort of thing. Then, if you are needy enough, I'll help you."

Iwalked toward the third Santa, who was in a corner watching CSPAN. "Who are you?" I asked. He sighed. "I'm Independent Santa."

"Can you help me?"
"Maybe. I haven't made up my mind."

It was hopeless. I wandered back outside and spotted an elf lounging on a park bench. "Kind of a mess with the Santas in there," I said.

"Yeah," he snarled, "but just wait."

"Until Christmas?" I said, my hopes rising for a miracle.

"No. Until election day. Because trust me, if this keeps up, we'll have a whole new bunch of Santas by next year."

— CNN's Tom Foreman is a regular on "AC360°" (www.ac360.com) and "The Situation Room."



► President Obama

Romney: Pull out a 'failure'

LITTLETON, N.H. Republican presidential hopeful Mitt Romney on Thursday attacked U.S. President Barack Obama for a "signature failure" to keep some troops in Iraq. Just days after U.S. troops left Iraq, a wave of bombings killed at least 72 people in Baghdad on Thursday. The Shiited government is engulfed in a crisis that risks fracturing Iraq along sectarian and ethnic fault lines.

REUTERS

Baby food recalled

BENTONVILLE. Wal-Mart Stores pulled some Enfamil baby formula cans from its shelves this week after the death of a Missouri newborn, sending shares of the formula's manufacturer, Mead Johnson, down as much as 21 percent on Thursday. The infant tested positive for Cronobacter, a bacteria that has sometimes been linked to illnesses in newborns. **REUTERS**

In Pakistan, army coup?

ISLAMABAD. Pakistan's powerful army is fed up with unpopular President Asif Ali Zardari and wants him out of office — but through legal means and without a repeat of the coups that are a hallmark of the country's 64 years of independence, military sources said. **REUTERS**



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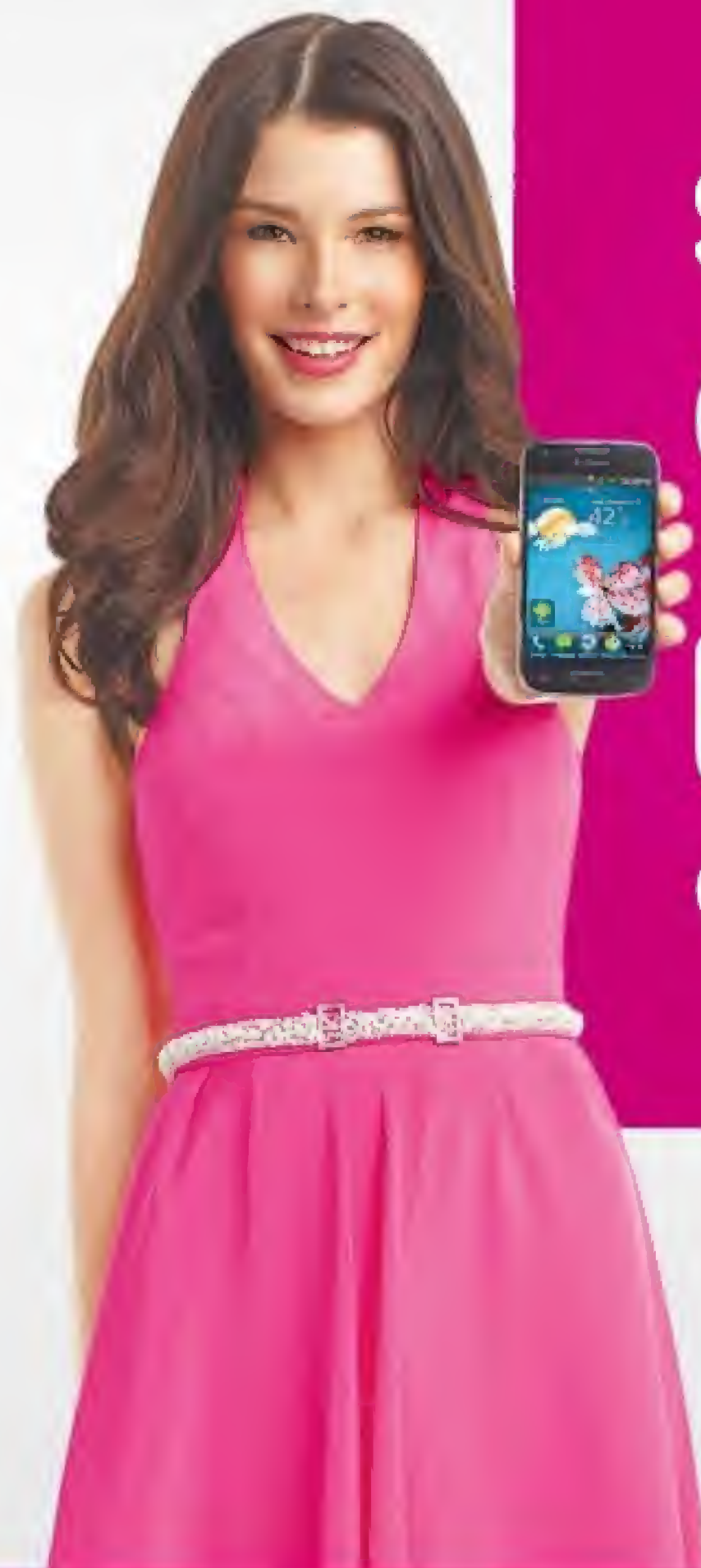
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2

WEEKEND

- ◉ Inhabiting the title character of 'The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo' involved some strange costuming requirements for Rooney Mara
- ◉ Why international audiences have embraced the series

Q&A: Undressed

What's the one part of Lisbeth that's depicted in the movie that might get overlooked, a detail that you hope people catch?

I can't think of a serious answer to that question, but I can think of a ridiculous answer to that question.

Ridiculous answers work, too.

Well, her merkin. There was a lot of discussion that went into my merkin for the movie, because I was naked quite a lot. And I don't think a lot of people will notice all of the attention that went into that. But there was a lot of discussions around that.

What sort of discussions are we talking about?

Well, you know, in the book she's meant to have strawberry-blond hair originally and she dyes it, so we had a special merkin made that was, you know, strawberry-blond so that it would fit. [Laughs]

Rape. Murder. Freezing cold weather. Happy holidays from "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo," the latest film adaptation of Stieg Larsson's international best-selling novel.

The book — about a journalist (Daniel Craig) who investigates a dysfunctional family's murder mystery, with help from anti-social hacker Lisbeth Salander (Rooney Mara) — has already spawned a successful Swedish film trilogy. So what was the draw for signing on to a remake, especially a dark one?

For Craig and Mara, it was a chance to work closely with director David Fincher, though Mara also worked with him in "The Social Network." "Tattoo" is generating similar Oscar buzz, but it's not without its share of controversy and critics thanks to some startlingly frank and sexual subject matter.

Mara divulges to us some exclusive, behind-the-scenes details.

Lisbeth is an iconic character with piercings and a punk look. How collaborative was David Fincher with you regarding the look?

There were a lot of discussions about the character — about the way she looks, about the way she walks, about the way she talks, about her eye contact, about her mannerisms. But at the end of the day, you know, obviously I'm the person playing the character — so he did give me a lot of freedom in that.

Why do you think it is that when a female character is presented as strong and is in any way sexualized, some people dismiss it as exploitative or misogynistic? I don't know, because people are stupid? [Laughs] I don't know why. Because I think it scares people. Things that people aren't



► Rooney Mara wears full Lisbeth Salander regalia in "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo."



Mara and co-star Daniel Craig

used to seeing or experiencing scares them. The thing that's so interesting about this character is that she has these two different sides. She's perfectly capable of taking care of herself, but at the same time she's vulnerable and put in these horrible positions.

She's wise beyond her years and incredibly bright, but at the same time she's emotionally stunted at 12 years old and is naive and doesn't have a lot of experience with other people. So I think that's what makes her so interesting, that she has these opposing sides. She's been sexually abused, but at the same time she's

very sexual, and I think that also probably scares some people.

She's a full human character, which I guess people aren't maybe used to seeing in Hollywood for a female lead.

Yeah, I guess that's part of it. Maybe she's not that incredible. Maybe she's just actually a fully developed human. [Laughs]

Has playing such a hacker made you any more paranoid about your own online life?

Yeah, it has. I was pretty paranoid before, but this has made me more paranoid. I don't think it's good to live your life in fear, but certainly you need to be more conscious of it.



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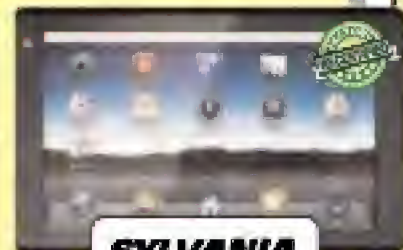
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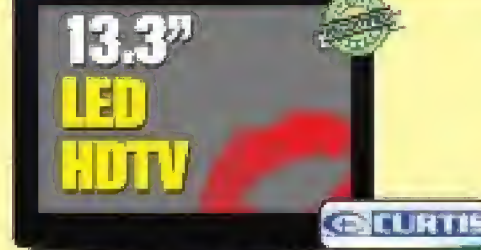


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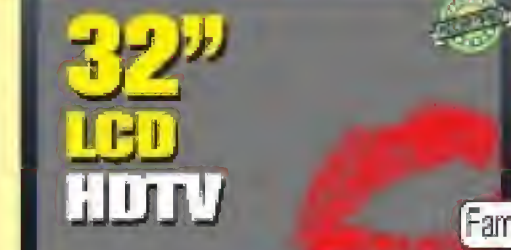
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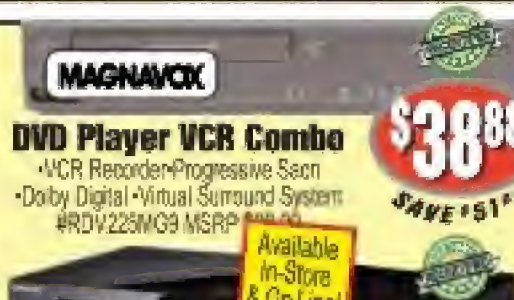


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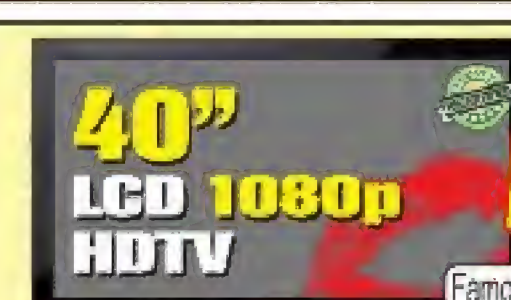
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Matt Damon's '20 seconds of insane courage'

► Lions, tigers, auditions — oh my ► The 'We Bought a Zoo' star on life's most challenging moments

Sexy, talented, smart and an all-around good guy, Matt Damon seems like the type of actor to have effortlessly slipped into Hollywood stardom. But in the midst of promoting the upcoming family drama, "We Bought a Zoo," Damon reveals that his 20 seconds of insane courage (a concept in the movie) occurred as it does for most actors: auditioning for his first break into movies.

"I remember feeling that if I can push through this fear right now, whether I get the part or get rejected, not going through the door ... is going to be bad for me," he recalls. "There's something better for me on the other side of the door."

Damon confesses that such a scenario occurred many times throughout his younger years. "I remember feeling that way a lot," he admits. "The experience, any [of my cast mates] can tell you, is that you get rejected a lot." But Damon said it gets easier with each rejection, especially the "exquisite" ones. "Those kind tend to inoculate you as you move forward down that road of being a professional actor."

As professional as Damon may be, when it came to slippery reptiles he co-starred with in "Zoo," the action-movie star admits he



► Matt Damon plays Benjamin Mee, a widowed father of two who purchase a dilapidated 18-acre zoo, which he rebuilds with his family.

NEAL FRESTON — TM AND © 2011 TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX FILM CORPORATION

"I remember feeling that if I can push through this fear right now, whether I get the part or get rejected, not going through the door ... is going to be bad for me."

DAMON, ON HIS FIRST AUDITION

wasn't so tough.

"I was much more nervous about the snakes," he says. "There was something about there being so many and watching the little kids handle them." Damon and

co-star Thomas Haden Church joked that the crew threw in a few poisonous ones. "They threw in a Green Mamba just for laughs," Church teased. "One of them in there can kill you!"

They joke, but in reality, Damon says all the animals involved in the film were treated with the upmost respect.

"We all acted with incredible deference to the trainers," he notes. "When the animals were on the set it was all about them — particularly the really big scary ones."

If you weren't an actor, what would you be?

Two of Damon's co-stars consider other paths their lives could have taken.

► Scarlett Johansson: "I work with a lot of nongovernmental organizations. ... I



think I would dedicate more of my time to that. I also think it would be nice to have a vineyard somewhere and have an organic farm or

something like that. Just sort of a hippy-dippy career."

► Elle Fanning: "Well, I guess my hobbies outside of acting [include] a lot of ballet, so I would probably really pursue my ballerina career — but you have to be so good at it. ... So I would have to try really hard."

SALLY MORRIS
letters@metro.us

Also opening. "War Horse"



► Jeremy Irvine and Emily Watson star as two thirds of the impoverished Narracott family in "War Horse."

Spielberg's epic 'Horse'

One of the films already short-listed for a probable Best Picture Oscar nomination is Steven Spielberg's "War Horse." It's based on the 1982 children's novel by Michael Morpurgo, which was also adapted for the stage in 2007. Check out our exclusive interview with actress Emily Watson in next week's year-end edition to learn more about the film.

ANDREW JOHNSON



► Frost

Americans may not have an intimate bond with the stories of Belgian adventurer Tintin and his dog Snowy, but Herge's classic comic book series is deeply embedded in European pop culture. As the 3-D version of "The Adventures of Tintin" hits theaters, we asked Nick Frost, who plays clueless Interpol agent Thomson, what Tintin might do if faced with the scenarios Frost dealt with in his previous movies.



HEIDI PATALANO
heidipatalano@metro.us

What would Tintin do?

► Nick Frost, star of 'The Adventures of Tintin,' imagines the title character in some of his other films

Scenario 1:

Nick Frost movie: Zombie horror/comedy "Shaun of the Dead"

Question: What would be Tintin's preferred method of killing a zombie?

Frost: I think he's quite a flamboyant zombie killer. There's potentially two [ways]. There's a luger to the brain. I think Tintin's very clever. I think he'd understand that a pistol runs out of bullets. A sword never runs out of bullets so I think he'd use his skills as a swordsman to run a sword through its eye. Snowy would have to get involved too at some point. Maybe he drags meat behind him and the zombies then follow.

Scenario 2:

Nick Frost Movie: Upcoming film "Snow White and the Huntsman"

Question: If Tintin was one of the seven dwarfs, which one would he be?

Frost: I think he'd be "Clean-y."



► Thomson and Thompson, two bumbling Interpol agents, are voiced by longtime collaborators Nick Frost and Simon Pegg in "The Adventures of Tintin."

Scenario 4:

Nick Frost Movie: Upcoming third film in "Blood and Ice Cream" trilogy (which follows "Shaun of the Dead" and "Hot Fuzz") to be shot in the next year or two.

Question: If Tintin was going to have a part in the third "Blood and Ice Cream" film.

Cream" film, what would it be?

Frost: My answer was going to revolve around the words "Hitler's bomb" again and how he kind of sets it off. But I can now state that Hitler's bomb will not appear in the third "Blood and Ice Cream" film.

Scenario 3:

Nick Frost Movies: Alien invasion flicks "Attack the Block" and "Paul"

Question: If Tintin was an alien, what would be his method of exterminating mankind?

Frost: I think he'd probably just erase us from or-

bit. We wouldn't even know and "bip!" you're done. Or he finds something called "Hitler's Bomb" and detonates that. It is a giant bomb that's the size of a mountain that Hitler had but didn't tell anyone and then he just finds it.

GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINEE

BEST ACTOR MICHAEL FASSBENDER

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The feed ...

On Fridays, Dorothy will post the best tweets she received during the week. You can always let her know what you think — good or bad — at @dorothyatmetro.

Being pregnant, food is all I think about these days. So I asked readers what they were most looking forward to eating over the holidays. It will make you hungry just reading their responses. Happy holidays, everyone!

▶ @danafour everything... then looking forward to hibernation into 2012

▶ @angikins Anything else you're excited about eating over the holidays? Is the most pregnant lady question EVER.

▶ @JHPointon My sister always makes me Buckeyes (peanut butter balls dipped in chocolate), the best treat!

▶ @JudyWEdu The cookies I'll be baking tomorrow; some for gifts, lots for me.

▶ @artshimko All the Filipino Christmas parties I go to have a roasted pig, that has to be my favorite of all time!

▶ @cardiff_flyer Spam, Spam, Spam, Eggs and Spam!

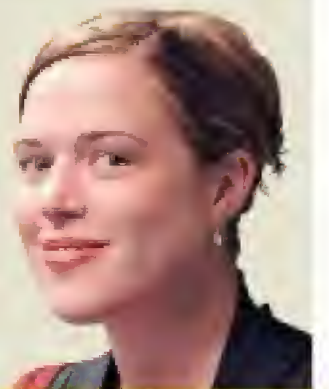
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THE WORD



Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip t @dorothyatmetro m dorothy.robinson@metro.us

Just because he wears eyeliner ...

Well, this is awesome: Former "American Idol" star **Adam Lambert** was arrested and briefly jailed in Finland after reportedly getting into a gay bar brawl with his boyfriend, Finnish "Big Brother" star **Sauli Koskinen**, according to the Hollywood Reporter. Lambert is in Helsinki to spend Christmas with Koskinen's family, and the couple was out drinking with Finnish beauty queen and ex-Miss Helsinki **Sofia Ruusila** when an argument between the two men turned violent, causing them to be kicked out of the bar. Their fight

continued in the street, where Lambert reportedly hit Ruusila by mistake, she told a Finnish entertainment channel. Lambert and Koskinen were arrested and questioned for several hours before being released Thursday afternoon.

Finnish beauty queens, gay bar fights, jail time — and here you thought you'd have an interesting Christmas break if your mother had two glasses of wine instead of her usual one. Adam Lambert for the win!



Adam and his beau in less punchy times.



Beyonce on her Christmas

Beyonce says she and **Jay-Z** are looking forward to enjoying the holidays free from the glare of television. "I will be with family. We are both so busy throughout the year that Christmas is just a time to relax with family and count the many blessings in your life," the pregnant pop star says, according to Contact Music. "Christmas Day is a no-TV zone. We just like to sit and talk together as a family." She also admits that being expectant parents will likely have an effect on the gifts they buy: "We both keep seeing super cute stuff for the baby, so I am sure even our presents for each other will involve the baby."

Talking points

Kutcher moves on

Ashton Kutcher is apparently making the most of his newly single status, as the "Two and a Half Men" star was spotted hanging out with three young women in Berlin this week, where he's reportedly researching a new business venture, according to Hollyscoop. Kutcher and the three women were

spotted getting into his chauffeured car together, though he was later seen heading into an apartment with just one of them, a brunette.

A lovely, Lively holiday

Ryan Reynolds treated **Blake Lively** to some pre-holiday family time while the couple was in Vancouver this week, according to Us Weekly. After shopping for toys and cupcakes earlier in the day, the pair joined



▶ Is Bell off the market?

Reynolds' mother and brother for dinner at Tojos restaurant. Sources who spotted Lively and Reynolds around town say they were "really friendly" but kept to themselves.

Is Jamie Bell shopping for rings?

The rekindled romance must be working, because **Jamie Bell** and **Evan Rachel Wood** are reportedly thinking about marriage. "They have been shopping for

rings for at least a month," a source tells Us Weekly. And the two certainly aren't afraid of commitment, as they reportedly got matching tattoos during their initial courtship in 2006. "Evan and Jamie were really young and just getting going in their careers when they first met and they just weren't ready," another source tells Radar Online. "Now that they are older and both excelling in their professional lives, I think they feel ready to take their relationship to the next level."

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



Santas — and one Justin Bieber — from around the world

1. A diver dressed as Santa Claus performed at Hefei Underwater World yesterday in Hefei, China.

2. One participant dressed as Father Christmas holds her similarly dressed dog as she joined in the Noale Santa Run on Dec. 18 in Noale, Italy.

3. Indian youths dressed as Santa Claus participate in a pre-Christmas procession in Amritsar yesterday. Despite Christians forming a little over two percent of the billion-plus population in India, Christmas is celebrated with much fanfare and zeal.

4. Watch out, Santa — that's not a reindeer. In this image provided by Australia Zoo, a Sumatran tiger, Bashii, met Santa last week.

5. Santa Claus waved as he posed with his reindeer and sled outside Rovaniemi, Finnish Lapland, on Dec. 15.

1: ORIKAPOTIM/REUTERS/GETTY IMAGES
2: MARCO SROGIN/GETTY IMAGES
3: BARINDER NAGI/REUTERS/GETTY IMAGES
4: AUSTRALIA ZOO VIA GETTY IMAGES
5: KIRCHINKA KNESTRA/DAVID/GETTY IMAGES



Justin Bieber posed with Santa Goofy during a break from taping the "Disney Parks Christmas Day Parade" TV special at Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom park on Dec. 3. The show airs on Christmas Day on ABC.

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'Close Up Space' could use an edit

"Close Up Space" is a very flawed play about a cantankerous editor (David Hyde Pierce) who leads a decidedly abridged life — until his alienated, intractable daughter (Colby Minifie) drops by after she's expelled from boarding school. Reminiscent of Adam Rapp's "Animals and Plants" (not just because of

its strategic use of a snow machine), this work begins inside an attractive, prewar Manhattan office building but leisurely unwinds into surrealism. And those who embrace its atmosphere, rather than questioning some of its more puzzling elements, will enjoy it most.

Then again, there is plenty to question. How does an entire room disappear in the middle of the night? Why doesn't Paul Barrow (Pierce) fire his unfit office manager (Michael Chernus)? Why would a fiery feminist writer (Rosie Perez) fall for Pierce's mild-mannered malcontent? The title refers to a proofreader's



► Rosie Perez and David Hyde Pierce star in "Close Up Space," a world premiere by Molly Smith Metzler.

mark where a space between words or punctuation should be eliminated. Ironically, there is a lot here that could be edited out.

However, those willing to overlook technicalities and embrace the utter breakdown that happens in 120 minutes onstage can have an important theatrical experience. The omitted intermission is no pain, because it keeps you reeling toward catharsis. That be-

ing said, the final tableau undermines the magical realism into which the play beautifully devolves by presenting a concrete resolution. The director could have achieved greater impact by leaving us to wonder how and if our protagonist would change, rather than try to give us — and him — closure.

T. MICHELLE MURPHY
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If you go

► **MTC's "Close Up Space"**
Through Feb. 5
Stage 1 at City Center
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TV watch list

'Chuck'

COMEDY. It's "Chuck Versus the Santa Suit" in this holiday episode, but the real gift is Stan Lee guest starring as a spy. Friday, 8 p.m., NBC

'Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me!: A Royal Pain in the News'

SPECIAL. The popular radio news quiz succumbs to the allure of moving pictures and brings this year in review to the small screen. Friday, 8 p.m., BBC America

'A Christmas Story'

MOVIE. Rewatch your favorite scenes or the whole film — multiple times over — as this classic repeats in its annual 24-hour marathon. Saturday, 8 p.m., TBS

'It's a Wonderful Life'

MOVIE. Of course there's always this Jimmy Stewart holiday stalwart to watch if the whole "you'll shoot your eye out" plot isn't quite your thing. Saturday, 8 p.m., NBC

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Dance

ABT's 'The Nutcracker'
Through Dec. 31, **BAM**
Howard Gilman Opera
House, 30 Lafayette Ave.,
Brooklyn, \$25-\$120

The renowned American Ballet Theatre stages E.T.A. Hoffmann's classic surrealist tale "The Nutcracker" with choreography by ABT's Artist in Residence Alexei Ratmansky, a live orchestral performance and sets/costumes by award-winning Richard Hudson.

'Nutcracker: Rated R'
Through Dec. 29,
Le Poisson Rouge, 158
Bleecker St., \$20-\$30
Mesh corsets, hot-pink

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tulle, strobe lights and a Sugar Plum Fairy who dispenses cocaine from her cleavage: This isn't the PBS "Nutcracker" you surf past every year. Angela Harriell's choreography and direction and David F. Slone's story turn the classic holiday ballet into a rowdy, risqué burlesque.

LEAH TAYLOR

Theater

'Hugh Jackman: Back on Broadway'
Now through Jan. 1,
Broadhurst Theatre,
235 W. 44th St.,
\$68.50-\$156.50

This show makes you wonder if Hugh Jackman looks in the mirror each day and realizes he is ruining everything for all the rest of the men in the world. Not only is Jackman a beautiful singer, dancer, comic and raconteur; he can even self-deprecate. **JIM TAYLOR**

'Silence! The Musical'
Now playing, **P.S. 122,**
150 First Ave., \$25-\$79

This musical's creators playfully deconstruct "Silence of the Lambs" in a combination of hilariously inappropriate musical numbers and sharp one-liners that are true to the film, yet surprisingly fresh. The cast, led by the outstanding Jenn Harris as Clarice Starling, is obviously having as much fun as

THE RUNDOWN

► Metro's guide to what's happening in your city this week



Tilda Swinton, left, stars in "We Need to Talk About Kevin."

the audience. **STEPHAN PASCHALIDES**

Films

'Young Adult'
Now playing, **Regal Union**
Square, 850 Broadway,
\$13.50

Writer Diablo Cody and di-

rector Jason Reitman defy the sophomore slump with "Juno" follow-up "Young Adult," an unconventional homecoming dramedy starring Charlize Theron. Cody's script refreshes a predictable formula while comedian Patton Oswalt

flexes his dramatic chops as Theron's crippled counterpart. Theron shows acting maturity as a salty pariah. **MINDY BOND**

'We Need To Talk About Kevin'
Now playing,

Angelika Film Center,
18 W. Houston St., \$13

This film places us inside the head of Eva, a free-spirited travel author who finds herself in the middle of motherhood. But all is not sweetness and light, as Eva's spawn has sociopathic tendencies. Tilda Swinton delivers an award-worthy performance as Eva, and Ezra Miller is convincing as Kevin's teenage incarnation. **MB**

Music

DJ Rekha presents 'Bollywood Disco Xmas' with Rajstar
Sunday, 10 p.m.,
Le Poisson Rouge,
158 Bleecker St., \$12-\$15
Mixing hip-hop and traditional Indian/Pakistani music, these DJ sets define dance music's capacity to unite diasporic, multicultural elements. Bollywood Disco screens awesome Bollywood classics while Rekha and Rajstar kick out the bhangra and hip-hop jams. **STEPHEN GOSSETT**

Shopping

WIRED Store
Now through Dec. 24,
Times Square, 42nd St. and Broadway, free
The spot for gift-worthy gadgets, this year's pop-up is quartered in a 10,000-square-foot gallery in the heart of Times Square. Among the items on hand

are a 24-carat gold-plated Atari gaming console, an iTree docking station made from a hollow tree trunk and a desktop jellyfish tank. **MB**

Art

'Surviving Life: Collages by Jan Svankmajer'
Now through Feb. 26,
2012, Museum of the
Moving Image,
36-01 35th Ave., \$12

For his latest film, a psychoanalytical comedy about a middle-aged man who prefers his dreams to his everyday existence, Svankmajer weaves live action with cut-out animation, a painstaking process that yields bewitching results. **WJ**

Food

Mystery Mondays
Mondays,

5 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.,
Brooklyn Winery,
213 N. Eighth St.,
Williamsburg, \$10
Choose red or white, and the barkeep serves you three tastes of different wines. You figure out which is which. **WJ**

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Best bubbliies for New Year's Eve

At this point, you're likely planning your outfit, finalizing your entourage and mapping out your party route for New Year's Eve. But according to Nick Poletto, the education director for the Kobrand Corporation, you still have some bigger dilemmas ahead.

"There's only two major decisions you have to make on New Year's Eve," Poletto says. "What bubbles are you gonna drink, and who you're gonna kiss at midnight. I can only help you with one of those."

Here are Poletto's tips on choosing your best bubbly — in a variety of possible situations:

A boisterous house party

"Bring a bottle of prosecco. Prosecco is a great sparkling wine from Italy. It's kind of fruity, it's fun, it's not sweet, but it's easy to drink. In Italy, they drink it a lot just for fun or just to cleanse their palate. You can show up at a party sometimes, hand over the bottle and never see it again all night. If you're gonna show up [somewhere] you know you probably won't ever see that bottle again, I would bring prosecco."

A night out at a bar

"On New Year's Eve they usually bring in a couple of cases [of champagne], but they're not gonna have them by the glass — they're gonna let you order it by the bottle, and you're gonna pay \$90 [or] \$100 for it. So if you go to a bar, you're not gonna have a whole lot of choice. If you're a lot of people and you're not really focusing on the wine, order prosecco: It's a lot of fun, it's got the bubbles in it, it's light and it's fruity."



► Ringing in the year with a rowdy party? Prosecco is probably your best bet.

A formal gathering

"If you're going to someone's house where they appreciate wine, I would suggest a California sparkling wine because it's high quality, it's well-respected and it's just not as pricey as champagne is."

A dinner party

"If you want to bring something that's totally different but still affordable, I would suggest Cave from Spain. It's got those great yeasty and toasty flavors, and it's got great character to it, but it's not that expensive."

A quiet night in

"If you're having an intimate New Year's Eve with just your significant other [or] a few close friends, that to me would be champagne. Champagne is not cheap — it's the most expensive of the sparkling wines. It's also the most enjoyable of the sparkling wines, in my opinion, and you wanna make sure you can get more than one glass. If you're celebrating something more than New Year's Eve on that day — maybe an anniversary, an engagement, a first child or a special something that happened that year — it's always romantic to have rosé champagne. I think it's a bit more special."



MEREDITH ENGEL
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THE HIGH COST OF RESISTANCE

The Week That Was: Opinion

There's the way the world is and then there's the way we'd like it to be. In 2011, confronting this dichotomy made many people extremely uncomfortable.

For the majority of us, it seems, acceptance of the established order is enforced with the rigidity of scientific law. It is much easier, as they say, to "go with the flow" — a phrase that relates the comfortable norms of societal interaction with the physical realities of electricity: Just like a current will seek the path of least resistance, so too, apparently, will many thinking organisms. When one's path is impeded by some stubborn obstacle, the most natural inclination may be to bypass rather than confront and to get on with the business of one's flow.

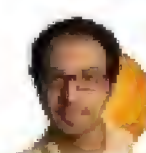


► A fellow soldier protests Bradley Manning's indefinite detention.

CHIP SOMODEVILL/GETTY IMAGES

the federal government for allegedly leaking sensitive Iraq War data in protest over his dissatisfaction about how it was being handled. Manning is currently subjected to "maximum custody" at Quantico's Marine Corps base in Va. — meaning he may not exercise, he may not sleep during the day and he may not have access to bedding or clothes at night, among other horrors.

Some say Manning deserves his fate — and perhaps that is so. If the government charges are accurate, he did, after all, push back against the flow. As long as resistance itself is an obstacle to those in power, the confrontation will always be severely discomforting.



BRAYDEN SIMMS
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Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages. Opposing viewpoints are welcome. Please send 100-word submissions to letters@metro.us.

Those who are not quite so conducive often end up paying a high price. One example is Bradley Manning, the young soldier being held indefinitely — and indelicately — by

Horoscope

♊ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19. Remember the time-tested adage: "Keep it simple, stupid." Nothing worthwhile will be achieved if your plans are overly convoluted and complex.

♒ Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 19. If you poke your snout into situations or places where it doesn't belong, you're likely to get drawn into something unpleasant that you and everybody else is trying to avoid.

♓ Pisces Feb. 20-March 20. Important decisions shouldn't be rushed, especially without first consulting the opinions of everybody who will be affected by the results.

♈ Aries March 21-April 19. Family and companions have enough to do, so don't ask anything of them that you can take care of unaided. Only an absolute necessity would be worth the imposition.

♉ Taurus April 20-May 20. Be exceptionally mindful of how much you're putting on your credit card. Don't load it up with a lot of extravagant whims just because of the holiday season.

♊ Gemini May 21-June 20. People in general are a bit touchy, so avoid discussing volatile issues with anybody, especially your mate. If a distasteful subject is introduced, it could spoil your day.

♋ Cancer June 21-July 22. It's always unwise to impose one's ideas on others, but it could prove to be especially disastrous during the holidays. People merely want to relax and enjoy themselves.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug. 22. There's no need to be totally wasteful regarding things that bring you instant gratification just because of the Yuletide season. Try to be a competent manager of your resources.

♍ Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22. It might seem like everyone is making heavy demands on your time, and you may have to alter your plans somewhat to accommodate them. It'll be worth it in the long run.

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23. If you are a tad too sensitive for your own good, it might cause you to put up a wall instead of building bridges to meet friends and family halfway, like you should.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22. Unless you try to live within your means, you will end up with a severe case of spender's remorse. Don't involve yourself in things that are way beyond your reach financially.

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21. The best way to get people to help you achieve your personal objectives is to keep your assertiveness in check. Aggressive behavior retards support.

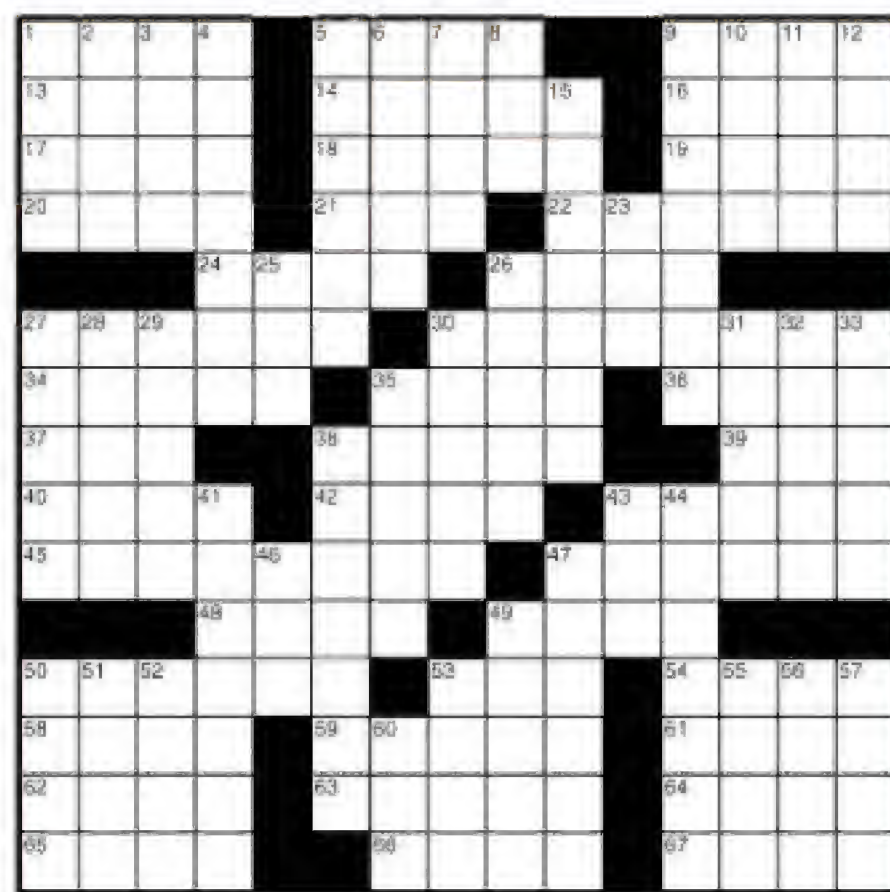
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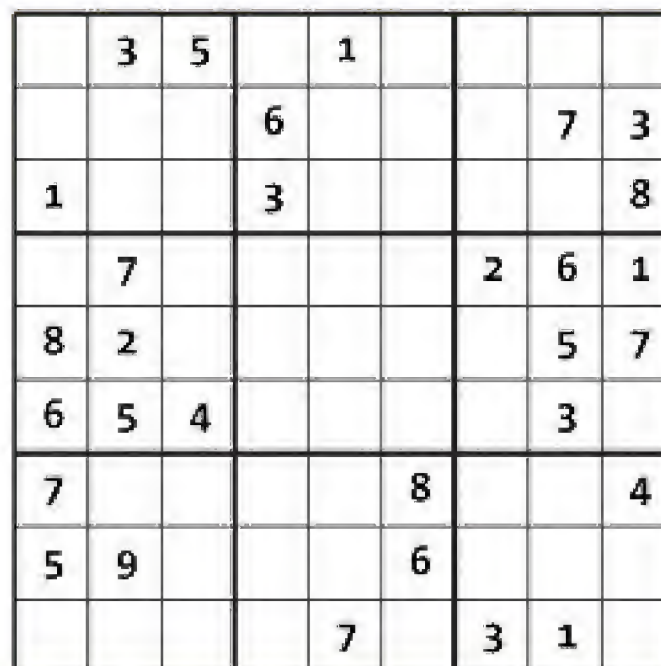
- 1 Camel's back
- 5 Veld prowler
- 9 Cheese in a trap
- 13 Kind of surgeon
- 14 Result (2 wds.)
- 16 Disconnect
- 17 Hay portion
- 18 Ms. Verdugo
- 19 Quell
- 20 Earthen jar
- 21 Unsold of the NBA
- 22 Fragrant blossoms
- 24 Minor dispute
- 26 All, in combos
- 27 Footman's attire
- 30 In rotation
- 34 Ouzo flavor
- 35 Sponge feature
- 36 Bahraini VIP
- 37 "The," to Hans
- 38 Kind of eclipse
- 39 Turkish potentate
- 40 Hence
- 42 Calcutta nanny
- 43 Weary exhales
- 45 Racing vehicle
- 47 Girder inserts
- 48 Cartoon shrieks
- 49 Raton, Florida
- 50 Genghis' grandson
- 53 Primeval
- 54 Scent finder
- 58 Two-color cookie
- 59 Undeliverable mail
- 61 Wrestler's grip
- 62 Fastidious
- 63 Close or Miller
- 64 Mayberry moppet
- 65 Fitness centers
- 66 Clingy fabric
- 67 NFL broadcaster



- 4 Satisfies
- 5 Room to maneuver
- 6 Bay
- 7 Lyric poems
- 8 Wimple wearer
- 9 Greyhound, e.g. (2 wds.)
- 10 Not "pro"
- 11 fix
- 12 Some turkeys
- 15 More prosperous
- 23 Quaint lodging
- 25 Game or season

- opener
- 26 Ms. Winfrey
- 27 Fills the hull
- 28 Dormant
- 29 Leo's neighbor
- 30 Bar's navigational system
- 31 Corporate concern
- 32 Dark time
- 33 Turf
- 35 Alternative to Nikes
- 38 Without
- 41 Spotted felines

- 43 Incite Rover
- 44 Rowena's innamorato
- 46 New Zealand parrot
- 47 Woodchuck, e.g.
- 49 Deli crepes
- 50 Hong
- 51 Deuterium discoverer
- 52 Laser emission
- 53 Slow-moving beasts
- 55 Fumbler's word
- 56 Lose a toehold
- 57 Blissful spot
- 60 Variety

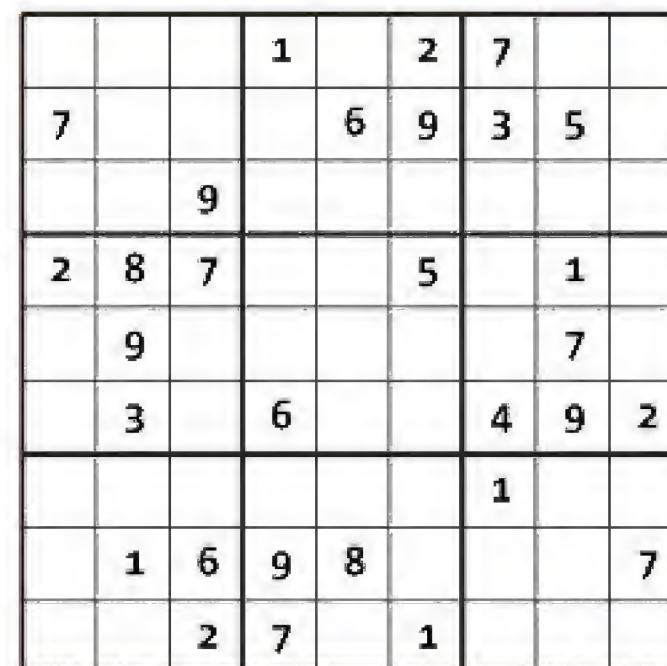


SUDOKU LEVEL: EASY

Solution to Thursday's crossword



How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.



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WEEKEND, DECEMBER 23-25, 2011

3

Next week

Metro Year-End Final Edition

Catch a recap of the best in New York sports in 2011 in the Dec. 27 paper.

What was the top sports story of the year in New York? Melo, Jeter or Jets?



► Brandon Jacobs and Plaxico Burress will clash in an all-important showdown on Saturday.

LET'S GO

► Time for talk is over ► Jets, Giants ready for likely playoff elimination game ► Gang Green backing coach

It was as surreal a moment as one might find in the Jets locker room. Bart Scott responded to a question earlier this week about the bulletin board material oozing from the Giants with a simple, "I don't want to get involved in that trash talk."

He's not alone in that sentiment, although his head coach has been the one primarily talking for his team this week. For his part, Giants head coach Tom Coughlin would have none of it.

"I just say, regardless of the talk, it will be decided at

Settle down

Dustin Keller says they see and hear what the Giants are saying, but it is nothing more than good talk.

"We haven't made a point to slow down all the talking; we're just doing things normally like we always do. It being so uncharacteristic of them to talk like this, it's being made to be more of a big deal," Keller told Metro. "How we handle it on the field, that's really all that matters."

1 o'clock Saturday afternoon. Regardless of what is said. Talk is cheap, play the game," Coughlin said. "That is the way I've always believed."

The Jets are letting Ryan doing the talking for them, but there is still the sense their coach is saying what they're all thinking.

"I'm going to ride with my coach all day. Whatever he talks about — we're going to be there to back him up," Antonio Holmes said.

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Nets' Lopez fractures foot, requires surgery

Getting Deron Williams to stay with the Nets for their move to Brooklyn just got a whole lot harder.

Not to mention winning games period.

The Nets announced Thursday morning that center Brook Lopez suffered a fracture in the fifth

metatarsal of his right foot in the first half of Wednesday's final exhibition game against the Knicks.

He remained in the game, playing through the injury. After the game, however, he went for an MRI and the team got the bad news.

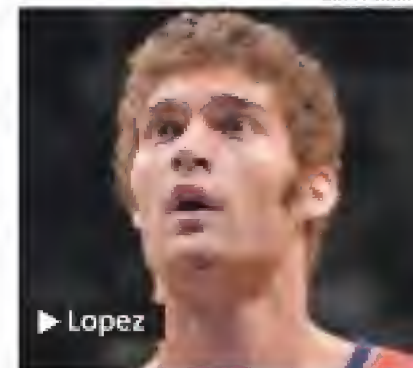
20 Lopez averaged 20.4 points per game last season. That was by far the highest on his team and his career best as well.

Surgery was scheduled for Friday. There is no timetable for his return,

but Yahoo! Sports reported the Nets were hopeful to have him back in February.

Lopez likely would've been the centerpiece of any trade for Orlando's Dwight Howard, but that is off the table due to the injury.

Of course, it also leaves



► Lopez

the Nets without their leading scorer from a year ago.

"I'm gonna do my job and look at the options, but they're not going to stop the season," Nets GM Billy King said. "We're going to be in Washington on the 26th at 7:05 tipping off." • METRO



► Ahmad Bradshaw says he plans to play Saturday.

Giants try to establish run game

- Jets' front seven makes rushing ball crucial to success for offense
- Backs must pick up blitz as well

Even though the NFL has become a passing league, the Giants say they still need to run the ball to have some semblance of balance.

How well Big Blue runs the ball against the stingy Jets front seven will be a strong indicator in determining the outcome.

Running back Brandon Jacobs said this will most likely be the rushing game's biggest test of the season.

"It's going to be a great challenge. Their defense is solid and one of the better defenses that we have to play against," Jacobs said. "They have a good interior and good corners. They play

good football and they're very physical. It'll be difficult to run the ball and be successful."

Tom Coughlin said establishing the running game and picking up those blitzes when they decide to pass is what has made the coaching staff put in the extra hours this week.

"They are a pressure outfit and they do come from different personnel combinations, in many different ways," said Coughlin. "It's a challenge, no doubt. It's a challenge for every team in the league that plays them."

TONY WILLIAMS
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Cleveland at Baltimore 1 p.m.	Baltimore	Baltimore	Cleveland
Arizona at Cincinnati 1 p.m.	Cincinnati	Arizona	Cincinnati
Minnesota at Washington 1 p.m.	Washington	Washington	Minnesota
Denver at Buffalo 1 p.m.	Denver	Denver	Buffalo
St. Louis at Pittsburgh 1 p.m.	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh
Oakland at Kansas City 1 p.m.	Oakland	Kansas City	Kansas City
N.Y. Giants at N.Y. Jets 1 p.m.	Jets	Giants	Giants
San Diego at Detroit 4:05 p.m.	San Diego	Detroit	Detroit
Philadelphia at Dallas 4:15 p.m.	Philadelphia	Dallas	Philadelphia
San Francisco at Seattle 4:15 p.m.	San Francisco	San Francisco	San Francisco
SUNDAY, DEC. 25			
Chicago at Green Bay 8:20 p.m.	Green Bay	Green Bay	Green Bay
MONDAY, DEC. 26			
Atlanta at New Orleans 8:30 p.m.	Atlanta	New Orleans	New Orleans

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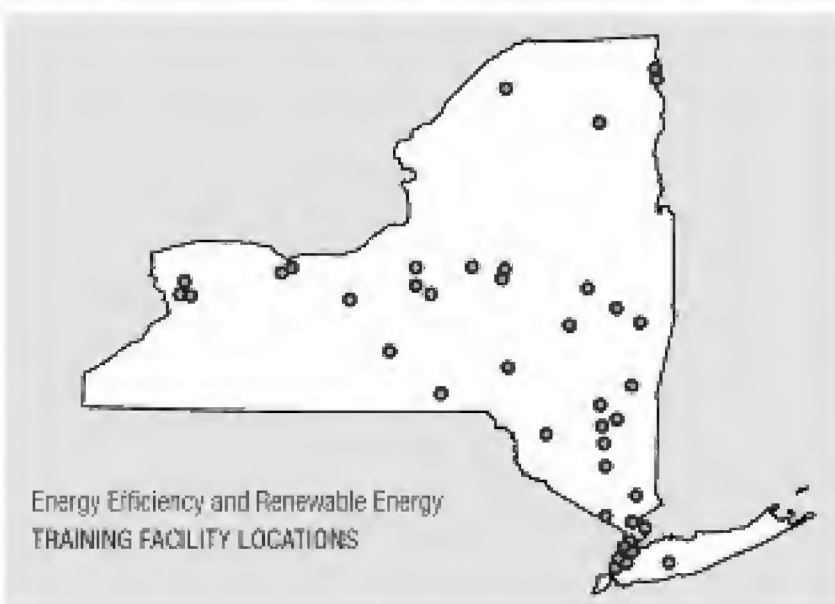
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